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SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

6th Year – *October 16, 1972*

No 169

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

an imperious demand:

End the US war of aggression in Viet Nam

... PRESIDENT Nixon's goal is not, as he often claims, to peacefully settle the Viet Nam issue and end the unjust, immoral US war of aggression soon, but to continue, prolong and widen this war of aggression; carry on the "Vietnamization" policy with a view to playing off Vietnamese against Vietnamese and imposing US neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam; extend the US war of aggression to the whole Indochinese peninsula to pit Indochinese against one another for the materialization of the extremely reactionary doctrine bearing his name.

The US war of aggression as prosecuted by the Nixon administration is on a larger scale and more atrocious and more cruel than it was ever under any of the previous administrations. The utterly bellicose and vicious Nixon clique, by pursuing the "Vietnamization" policy, putting in motion the "pacification" programme, propping up the puppet regime in Saigon, extending the war of aggression to Cambodia and Laos, re-escalating the war of destruction against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and "re-Americanizing" the war, has committed innumerable crimes of genocide, biocide and ecocide against the Vietnamese people and the other peoples of Indochina.

While intensifying its criminal war of aggression, the Nixon administration has been clamouring hypocritical allegations about "peace" and making perfidious diplomatic and political ploys to hoodwink public opinion. Nixon's 8 points of Jan. 25 and address of May 8 this year are the embodiment of the obdurate stand of the US which consists in demanding that the Vietnamese people pay a ransom for its aggression and lay down their arms to accept the Saigon puppet administration. This amounts to demanding the scrapping of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the perpetuation of the US neo-colonialist rule in South Viet Nam.

That is an arrogant demand that the South Vietnamese people categorically reject.

Though the South Vietnamese people's struggle is scoring signal, all-sided and steady successes and will surely win complete victory, the RSVN PRG, with its traditional good will, in its important September 11, 1972 Statement, has once more set forth correct, fair, reasonable and realistic proposals for a peaceful solution to the South Viet Nam problem on the basis of the genuine respect of the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights, of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination and arising from the actual situation in South Viet Nam. The RSVN PRG's proposal has won warm approval and strong support from public opinion and progressives around the world including in America.

The Nixon administration must rapidly end the US war of aggression in Viet Nam! That is the imperious demand of the Vietnamese and American peoples and peace-freedom- and justice-loving people over the world!

As long as the Paris Conference on Viet Nam gets no results, as long as peace is not restored in Viet Nam, full responsibility for this rests with the US!

For their independence and freedom, the South Vietnamese people, under the leadership of the SVN NFL and PRG, are determined to persevere in pushing forward their sacred struggle against US aggression for national salvation till complete victory and, together with their compatriots in the entire country, stand side by side with the brotherly Cambodian and Lao peoples to utterly defeat the Nixon doctrine in Indochina, positively contributing to safeguard peace in Southeast Asia and in the world.

(Excerpt from the message of President **HUYNH TAN PHAT** of the RSVN PRG to the 3rd session of the International Commission of Enquiry into US Crimes in Indochina-Copenhagen, Denmark)

A Nixon's genocidal war crime:
A luxuriant area near Saigon (above) *turned into waste land by US toxic chemicals* (below)

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MAKE-UP AT THE 2 in the shadow of the american embassy in Saigon

(Continued)

10. The Highlands Satrap

DO Cao Tri died before he could fulfil his dream of commanding the big operation involving 40,000 troops into Highway 9 and Southern Laos, in replacement of Major-general Hoang Xuan Lam who was ill-fitted for the job (the Saigon press considered Lam to be at best suited for a regimental command). Almost at the same time a big scandal erupted around the name of General Ngo Dzu.

Ngo Dzu was called the Highlands Satrap. A major-general since 1968, he was appointed commander of the Second Corps Area, the largest, an immense region stretching from the mountains to the sea and containing tremendous wealth. It was populated by many ethnic minorities and looked upon as of great strategic value. A Saigon paper observed in 1970: "President Thieu's right hand, General Tri, holds Saigon, while his left hand, General Dzu, takes a firm grip of the Highlands."

Why then did Ngo Dzu fall into disfavour? The story, as circulated in the posh restaurants of Cholon, is as follows: It all began with an outburst of anger from President Nixon in May 1971. Drug-addiction had reached an alarming rate in the US expeditionary corps. A special report by the federal narcotics administration on drug-addiction among returned GIs as well as among the US expeditionary corps in South Viet Nam struck Nixon and his advisers with understandable anguish. The addiction rate was not a mere 15% as anticipated, but as high as 32%, and even 40% in the Americal Division. Other reports from American Congressmen, doctors and lawyers who visited South Viet Nam in June and July contained descriptions of a wretched state of affairs: depravation and indiscipline were rampant among the GIs, who refused to go to battle, murdered their mates and even killed their commanders. The reason for this was their disillusionment with the war, a murderous and meaningless war. This moral decay was spreading to American troops in Western Europe and the US itself. Panic-stricken members of Congress suspected a devilish trick of the adversary, whose "secret weapon consisted in having the drugs sold at dirt-cheap prices to the GIs through a network of ubiquitous pushers." Saigon newspapers also sounded the alarm: "A heroin war has surged in Viet Nam!"

Soon, however, a top-secret CIA report, which had been compiled by special agents and brought to Nixon by CIA chieftain Richard Helms personally, leaked out. The CIA men had come to the region dubbed Golden Triangle, which lies at the meeting-point of the frontiers of Viet Nam, Laos and Burma, where 1,200 tons of opium were being produced annually. They took a close look at the channels of distribution of the drug (including those run by the CIA itself, which link the place to Long Cheng, Vientiane and Bangkok) and concluded: "Heroin has been supplied to the GIs through the business undertakings of the Vietnamese (Saigon) generals." An appended list cited 42 names with functions and ranks, all pillars of Thieu's regime. Ngo Dzu's name topped the list.

After a full debate by the National Security Council of the mortal danger facing the American troops, President Nixon wrote a personal letter to Thieu in which he curtly demanded that an end be put to that systematic poisoning of the GIs and punishment be meted out to those who for the sake of base material interests were luring hundreds of thousands of their American "allies" to slow but certain destruction.

The content of the letter somehow leaked out. Major-general Ngo Dzu was greatly shocked or rather feigned great shock, and hastily came to Saigon for an "explanation" campaign in which he went so far as to challenge to a pistol duel anyone who "dared to drag in the mud the generals of the Republic and sully national prestige."

But no one was fooled. Anyone who set foot in Da Lat, the fashionable resort in the Central Highlands, knew in what kind of business the general had been engaging. You could hear it openly discussed in the lounges of the posh hotels, such as the Palace and the Lang Biang. In Da Lat you can easily get things that are rather hard to come by in Saigon: such costly drugs as "yellow" LSD pills could be had at 10,000 piastres a bottle; green ones at much lower prices. Tablets that are a mixture of mescaline and LSD, much sought after by wealthy revellers of both sexes, could be obtained in any amount. Prosperous American business executives and globetrotters are unanimous in their praise of Da Lat. The air is cool (never more than 16° C., day or night), the streams and pine groves beautiful. What is more, you can get things that are hard to obtain even in such places as Marseilles (France) and Los Angeles (USA), and at such low prices you couldn't believe your ears: Red Rock heroin (95% pure) costs two dollars a bottle (100 in the US); a packet of 20 filter-tipped marijuana cigarettes, 50 cents.

All the channels, big and small, were controlled by Ngo Dzu and his underlings. Thousands of tourists—American, French, West German, Japanese, Filipino, Indonesian,— were freely spending their dollars in Da Lat. They could drink and dance all night, go boating, play tennis, and for their orgies, rent luxurious villas or repair to plush night-clubs.

The lion's share of the dividends from those business naturally found its way into Ngo Dzu's pockets. In May 1971, the liberation forces attacked Da Lat. The Saigon army's military academy and staff college fell into their hands. The pleasure-seeking tourists hastily disbanded. They cursed Ngo Dzu who barely a month before had boasted that "never could the Viet Cong penetrate into Da Lat!"

However busy he was massacring local minority people (Ba Na and E De tribespeople especially) and herding them into "strategic hamlets," Ngo Dzu always found time to come to Da Lat at least once a week to supervise the work of his subordinates and to immerse himself in revelry. A colonel of the 22nd Infantry Division, who had occasion to accompany the general to his "headquarters," was quite impressed. The building was a luxurious villa which had belonged to Nguyen Huu Hao, the father-in-law of "Emperor" Bao Dai. Built on top of a hill with a fine view on neighbouring landscapes, it had changed masters several times: Bao Dai and his consort, French Governor General Decoux, the Japanese commander-in-chief in Indochina, French Marshal De Lattre de Tassigny and most recently, Ngo Dinh Nhu (brother and adviser to Ngo Dinh Diem) and his wife. Ngo Dinh Nhu, an opium-addict, had had a room on the second floor specially fitted out for his drug-taking sessions, during which he was able to enjoy a splendid view of pine-covered hills.

Along the Saigon—Da Lat highway, in such towns as Blao and Tung Linh, Ngo Dzu's men had set up whorehouses and opium and gambling dens, the resorts of playboys, most of them children of VIPs, scions of wealthy families, smugglers, and prosperous wholesale dealers in vegetables, one of the main products of Da Lat. All benefited from General Ngo Dzu's generous, but by no means disinterested, protection. International smugglers also maintained fruitful partnership with the satrap. Scores of quintals of processed opium were ferried by helicopter from a remote region in Burma to Pleiku, Kontum, Da Lat, Pakse, Long Cheng, from which they were distributed to the American clientele through the general's network of military transport.

In early 1971, while the Lam Son 719 operation into Southern Laos was running into deep trouble, Ngo Dzu, on Abrams's order, twice went by chopper to Pakse on the bank of the Mekong, the headquarters of the Fourth Military Region of the Vientiane army. There he met General Phasouk, commander of the Military Region and satrap of Bassac, a rich area of the Country of the Million Elephants, the colourful name by which Laos is often designated.

The two parties discussed prospects for incursions into the Saravan-Attopeu highlands in order to hamper the liberation forces' strategic supplies. But the plan was eventually abandoned for lack of troops and fear of annihilation. Yet, Ngo Dzu's time was by no means wasted. He concluded a fruitful deal with Phasouk whereby an opium—and heroin—ferrying line was set up between Pakse and Pleiku, and business progressed apace until the fall of Dakto and Tan Canh cost Ngo Dzu his post.

It was public knowledge that Dzu's father was the owner of an import-export undertaking with branches in many cities of Trung Bo: Quang Ngai, Da Nang, Qui Nhon... and of course had a finger in the heroin pie.

Ngo Dzu's greed knew no bounds. In this, he was a typical representative of the top brass of the Saigon regime. In 1970, he had thought out a scheme which fitted very nicely into Mr Nixon's plan for "Vietnamization." After the transfer by the American Fourth Infantry Division of a base at Duc Co to the Second Corps Area Command, Ngo Dzu ordered that the base be auctioned off, and the proceeds incorporated into the Corps Area's special fund. Anyone who has had occasion to pass by an American base knows that it is worth a great deal of money: hundreds of rows of military huts with pinewood beams and walls and tin roofs, air-conditioners, electric generators, radio and television sets, electric fans, safes, filing cabinets, costly plumbing, bath-tubs, duralumin-framed furniture, typewriters, mimeograph machines, etc. The American troops have lost the war, all right, but they remain none the less a modern and wealthy army. And the Americans are always very "generous" towards their "allies." On Washington's orders, all American bases in South Viet Nam, together with all their equipment and installations, are to be transferred to the Saigon army to help it "grow as strong as its big brother." But Ngo Dzu had his own conception of "Vietnamization." Within two weeks, everything at Duc Co had disappeared, sold off lock, stock and barrel. To whom? To the generals of course, their relatives, and their underlings. At about one-tenth of market prices. The lion's share naturally came to Ngo Dzu, whose million-dollar account in a Hong Kong bank grew noticeably fatter.

The subsequent "Vietnamization" of other American bases greatly benefited from the experience thus acquired. It no longer took as much as two weeks, but a mere two days to dismantle each of the American bases at Dac To, Le Thanh, Pley Mrong, An Khe... Long columns of military lorries had been assembled, outlets found, prices fixed. The Americans complained to General Cao Van Vien and "President" Thieu, but all they got was a polite, "Thank you, we'll have a look into the matter." Of course both of Ngo Dzu's superiors were in the know but their mouths were kept tightly shut by means of enormous bribes, amounting to millions of piastres. Colby, the head of USAID, asked "Premier" Khiem to put an end to that "sabotage" and got this polite, but firm, rejoinder: "Once handed over to the Vietnamese side, the bases become Vietnamese property and the Vietnamese know best what to do with them." The only resort left to the infuriated Colby was to curse the "incompetent and venal generals" of Saigon.

It was the only case in which the Saigon top brass, who as a rule are at the Americans' beck and call, dared to defy them.

After the disaster at Tan Canh and Dakto in late April 1972, Ngo Dzu was recalled to Saigon, "pending investigation." He was often seen in company with General Hoang Xuan Lam, the general cashiered after the fall of Quang Tri, at the city sports club. Clad in immaculately white sports clothes, they were playing a lively game of tennis and enjoying it enormously.

Let military disaster follow military disaster. Let Saigon troops get their noses bloodied in one place after another. This in no way interfered with the generals' comfort. The only difference was that they now had plenty of time to enjoy the tremendous wealth they had amassed over the past decade or so thanks to the blood shed by their soldiers. The threatened "investigation and trial" did not worry them in the least. They knew it was a put-up job aimed at soothing public opinion and allaying the despair and bewilderment in the Saigon army. The worst that could happen to them would be their appointment to some ambassadorship abroad. A Saigon lawyer observed: "In this country the administration of justice follows a very strange course indeed. It's just beyond the ordinary man's grasp. The sentences meted out sometimes cause the accused to jump for joy, for they mean no punishment at all, but actual reward." Hoang Xuan Lam and Ngo Dzu could thus wait for their trials with tranquil hearts. New favour would no doubt be bestowed upon them by their boss, the leader of the *Khaki Party*: Nguyen Van Thieu.

The replacement of Ngo Dzu as head of the Second Corps Area was also carried out in typical Saigon fashion. The new appointed was Brigadier Nguyen Van Toan who, as commander of the Second Infantry Division in Quang Ngai, had been brought to book on several occasions for such offenses as the rape of a 12-year-old girl, looting civilian property in broad daylight, accepting several million piastres in bribe from a subordinate against the promise, never fulfilled, to promote him to higher rank, plundering tons of cinnamon bark, marketing them with the complicity of Hoang Xuan Lam's wife and sharing the proceeds with her, etc. It was clear that he was made Ngo Dzu's successor solely by virtue of his proven ability to run the profitable business set up by the latter on behalf of Thieu, Khiem, Vien and *Co.*

(To be continued)

THANH NAM

37 mayors in DRVN issued appeal

ON October 3, the chairmen of the administrative committees of 37 cities and provincial capitals of the DRVN and the DRVN Commission for Investigation of US Imperialists' War Crimes in Viet Nam held a press conference in Hanoi to denounce the Nixon administration's extermination raids against urban centres of the DRVN.

Chairman Tran Duy Hung of the Administrative Committee of Hanoi read an appeal addressed to Mayors and urban populations throughout the world, pointing out that the Nixon administration for over five months now, has mobilized considerable air and naval forces, including one half of the total of its aircraft-carriers, over 1,000 tactical bombers, over 60 naval craft of various types, to rain by day and by night hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs and shells on cities and provincial capitals of the DRVN in the course of continuous attacks of extermination, threatening the lives of millions of civilians.

The appeal singled out that US B.52's carrying each 30 tons of bombs, have carpet bombed Hai Phong, Vinh and the provincial capitals of Thanh Hoa and Dong Hoi. US aircraft have launched over 200 attacks against nearly 700 places in Hai Phong city, 57 air-raids against the Hanoi capital city, over 30 against the Nam Dinh textile city, destroying 70 per cent of the houses there. The Hon Gay provincial capital have been completely flattened and other cities and provincial capitals such as Thai Nguyen, Viet Tri, Kien An, Hai Duong, Hung Yen, Phu Ly, Yen Bai... have been under repeated bombings.

The US aggressors have made full use of technological means, of the most sophisticated modern weapons to kill many people at a time. US bombs have been rained on schools, creches, killing teachers and children; on hospitals such as the Bach Mai Hospital (Hanoi), a medical establishment with 40 years of existence; on pagodas, churches, temples such as the Phat Diem cathedral while a great mass was under way, demolishing it and massacring many catholics while they were in prayers.

The chairmen declared that the Nixon administration must bear full responsibility before history and the world's peoples for this crime of genocide, biocide and ecocide, for the crime of destruction of society. They urgently called on the peoples and governments of the friendly countries, the peace- and justice-loving countries, on Mayors around the world, on the American people to denounce in time and strongly condemn the crimes of the Nixon administration, considering that "every minute of delay will mean death for more old folk, mothers, children, workers, intellectuals..."

DRVN in brief

Forest protection is an all-people job sanctioned by law

o A Conference of North Viet Nam Trade Union leaders was recently convened by the Viet Nam Federation of Trade Unions to discuss the participation of workers and civil servants in agricultural production. Hoang Quoc Viet, President of the Viet Nam Federation of Trade Unions, who was in the chair, appealed to trade unions at various levels to study the experience of the Hai Hung province trade union which succeeded in urging workers and civil servants of the province to produce agricultural machines, lime, fertilizers for agriculture.

o Members of the Youth Union in the Hanoi building branch are enthusiastically participating in a study drive on the subject of "more active contribution to our anti-US patriotic resistance." Everyone of them is endeavouring to become a staunch fighter in production and study. In many units, volunteers for the army have surpassed the fixed quota. Many girls have also asked to go to the front, besides assuming the tasks of those who have joined the army.

o A competition is in full swing among militiamen and self-defence members in Ninh Binh province for the downing of US aircraft flying at low altitude. Rural militia units are intensifying drilling and physical training. Night marches and ambushes are organized regularly. Militiamen of Kim Son district mounting guard in danger spots have downed 4 US aircraft.

o President Ton Duc Thang has awarded Ho Chi Minh badges to 29 members of the all-women artillery unit in N. commune, Le Thuy district, Quang Binh province, for having set afire two US vessels on May 5 and June 9, 1972, and to 10 female members of the militia unit of P. commune, Ky Anh district, Ha Tinh province, for having grounded an A.7 on September 16, 1972.

o On October 6, the National Bank of Viet Nam issued a strong statement against a new move of the Nixon administration: dropping of forged bank-notes by US aircraft on DRVN territory. The aim is visibly to disrupt the economic life of the country and undermine its finance, while stepping up psychologic warfare against the Vietnamese people. The protest pointed out that the Nixon administration grossly violated the sovereignt of the DRVN and international law and shrank from no crime to attain its aggressive objectives.

Here and there

Double Deception

The DRVN recently freed 3 US pilots captured in North Viet Nam.

On their behalf, the White House declared that in their interests and in those of their families, their release would be welcomed.

It was eventually welcomed in this manner :

First, on the announcement of the release, their families were "advised" not to go to Viet Nam to be handed over the POWs.

Second, on September 20, 1972, on the assumption that they were in the regular plane of the International Commission for Supervision and Control of the Implementation of the Geneva Agreements, a hundred troops had been massed at the end of the runway of Wattay airport, for a due reception (*Reuter*, September 20, 1972).

Unfortunately, they did not turn up.

Third, on September 23, 1972, again on the assumption that they were in the Soviet regular plane IL.18, a substantial security force consisting of 50 men and an important delegation of the US Embassy in Vientiane headed by Ambassador Godley himself (*AFP*, September 23) were kept cooling their heels for more than two hours at the same airport, with a US military DC.9 aircraft bearing a Red Cross marking, commissioned at the eleventh hour to take charge of the pilots and carry them to the Philippines.

Again, they did not show up.

Prickled Pentagon

That was the limit ! Mr Laird, the Defence Secretary began to fret and fume. Answering a US television interview, he scored North Viet Nam for walking about the streets the three released US pilots, in violation of the Geneva Convention (*Reuter*, September 24, 1972).

His righteous outburst however was neither justified nor justifiable for Western correspondents including Peter Arnett, an *AP* man who had been close on the heels of the three flyers reported that, first of all, they were comfortably put up with their parents and the people sent to welcome them, at a hotel with a pacific name, in the heart of Hanoi and that secondly they had taken a walk—yes a real walk—on the afternoon of September 18, with their mothers and wives, on a road usually haunted by Vietnamese couples on the shore of a great lake, in the centre of Hanoi, while Hanoians gazed at them with a kindness free from any trace of hatred.

Temporary Conclusion

The subsequent developments, rich in palatable details, are worth recalling : publication of the Coalition delegation of its September 22, 1972 message to Mr Nixon on the conditions for the return of the three POWs, their trip home via Peking, attempts at intervention of the US Embassy in Moscow which provoked the Reverend Coffin's indignation and Mrs Weiss's anger, the pilots' press conference at Copenhagen airport, their appeal to the American people for solidarity with them in the effort to achieve the release of other prisoners, the White House spokesman Ziegler's ambiguous words regarding what was awaiting them in the US, deployment of police at Kennedy airport on the night of September 28, Markham Gartley's mother's and Norris Charles's wife's complaints and jeremiads, Charles's declaration on landing, whisking of the three men off to three different army hospitals in three different towns, protests of the accompanying party and, as a temporary conclusion, a crowning culmination to the affair, Laird's exultant assertion that he would not stop flaying the DRVN "inhuman treatment" of the POW's families.

Naturally ! "Black dogs remain black," another proverb of ours goes. It means something like "what is bred in the bone, will come out in the flesh." And the American press criticized the behaviour of Mr Nixon and his confederates as unworthy of America's traditions (*The New York Times*). And the Swedish press had this to say : "All the three (pilots) were the very illustrations of the good material condition they enjoyed in their prison. They were very moved and embarrassed by the sight of US bombing destruction during their visit of raided places after their release. Denmark's former Prime Minister Otto Krag contradicted the US Defence Secretary by acclaiming the DRVN action as pervaded with "humaneness. "What do you say to this, Mr Laird ?

HUONG NAM

Mid-Central Viet Nam's solid battle array

A corner of Da Nang air-base after a PLAF onslaught in April 1972

MIDDLE Trung Bo (Central Viet Nam) has emerged from the 6-month-old drive of offensives and uprisings of the South Viet Nam armed forces and people as an embattled area distinguished by its good combat performance and all-sided success.

The battle array there is of rocklike firmness and gains have been obtained in quick succession.

In a period of more than 100 days since the start of the drive, the local armed forces and people put over 79,500 enemy troops out of action, destroyed or decimated 2 divisions, 73 battalions and multi-battalion units and 681 companies and platoons, shot down 511 aircraft, seized or wrecked 2,334 military vehicles and 240 artillery pieces, blasted out of commission 160 logistic supply bases, and burned down tens of thousands of tons of military hardware and equipment.

Topping the score board was Binh Dinh. In a one-month period beginning April 8, 1972, its armed forces and people exacted a toll of 2 regiments of Saigon's 22nd Division, 9 battalions and multi-battalion units of security forces and 600 Pak Jung Hi mercenaries. They also overran or forced the abandonment of 180 bases and positions. An adverse impact has been exerted on the US-Thieu "pacification" program and contributed to emasculating the Saigon army — backbone of "Vietnamization."

As a result, the area has strengthened its capability and at the same time widened its field of activity. While Saigon divisions were bogged down in Binh Dinh's northern districts of Hoai An, Hoai Nhon and Tam Quan, the local PLAF opened a new wave of assaults. On the night of August 17, 1972, they attacked in force Cam Doi and Que Son, wiping out more than 3,000 enemy troops and liberated the whole of Que Son valley and the west part of Thang Binh district. Later, actions against enemy relief operations into the Cam Doi-Que Son area inflicted another 1,500-odd casualties.

From September 2 to 9, 1972, the PLAF mounted assaults on the enemy defence complex and military sub-sector in Tien Phuoc and the district town, knocking out over 800 men, 3 infantry and artillery companies, and decimating 2 battalion and multi-battalion-size units of the security forces and 4 battalions of regular troops.

The enemy well-fortified defence line in Binh Dinh was smashed by big chunks right at the start of the offensive. This time, the outer defence perimeter protecting Da Nang and the towns of Hoi An and Tam Ky was breached. The whole of the enemy forces at the Northern edge of the Central coastal plain was therefore placed in a precarious position.

The PLAF activity has gained in momentum in all of Central Trung Bo, with regular troops, regional forces and guerillas fighting well-concerted battles in the frontline, behind the enemy lines, in his outer defence perimeter and in his sanctuaries.

Quang Ngai has also been a hot battlefield. The Americans have described it as a tough, most pro-communist province in South Viet Nam.

Alarmed by the fast mounting revolutionary tide in this province, the US-Saigon command has fielded a sizeable force comprising 25 battalions of troops, more than 70 security forces companies, close to 250 platoons of combat youths and popular self-defence forces plus a machine of tyrannical rule which has been functioning there since the Ngo Dinh Diem time. Yet, people's war keeps developing in the province and dealing crushing blows at the thinned out enemy forces.

In 30 days ending May 8, the PLAF of Quang Ngai blotted out 54 enemy bases and positions, 47 detention areas and strategic hamlets, knocked out more than 3,400 enemy troops and liberated 23 villages in the 4 districts of Binh Son, Son Tinh, Mo Duc and Duc Pho, with nearly 80,000 inhabitants.

In mid-September, violent popular uprisings erupted across the province, from Binh Son to Sa Huynh, from the coastal plain to the upland region.

In the small hours of September 16, the PLAF swung into action again. They overran enemy positions in Mo Duc district, the Ba To sub-sector and its district town defences, and the base areas of the Saigon 69th Border Ranger battalion, and at the same time struck at many enemy bases in Binh Son, Son Tinh, Tu Nghia and Nghia Hanh districts, while closing in on the provincial capital. By September 9, they had wiped out more than 2,000 adverse troops, written off or disbanded 10 companies, uprooted 35 enemy strongholds, crushed the quisling administration structure in 23 detention areas and strategic hamlets, and freed more than 50,000 inhabitants. The *International Herald Tribune* reported on September 20 steady gains of the patriotic forces in all battles in Quang Ngai.

The Front's victorious banner is now fluttering in all provinces. In September, Binh Dinh put out of action 1,650 adverse soldiers in 3 days, Quang Da 217 others. The adversary lost hundreds of men in the west part of Tuy Hoa district and Route One, Phu Yen province, as well as in Khanh Hoa. A US paper on June 18, 1972 observed that the central coastal plain was now the most unsafe area with the communists in control of vast sectors and the majority of the population supporting them.

Saigon troops heavily mauled in Quang Tri

IN the past 6 months, clear indications have been given of the great capability and strength of the people's war and of the stamina and sense of purpose of the local armed forces and people.

They have also shown the new sting of the PLAF and their ability to impose battles of their own choice to destroy major enemy units and strong enemy defence complexes, witness the knocking out of the 40th Regiment and the serious mauling of the 41st regiment in Binh Dinh, the destruction or depletion of 3 regiments of Saigon regulars in Que Son-Cam Doi and a series of similar engagements in which enemy outfits of battalion size, and military subsectors were made short work of, as in Hoai An, De Duc, Tam Quan, Bong Son, Duong Lieu, Phu My, Chu Gan, Liet Kiem, Tam Ky, Mo Duc, Duc Pho, Que Son, Tien Phuoc and Ba To. The PLAF have been in a position not only to fight the enemy in his outer perimeter but also to make deep thrusts into major enemy bases in key defence lines. They have been capable of staging onsets either in broad daylight or at night time, and of fighting sustained battles. This has made Saigon's elite main force units helpless and various defence complexes and heavily guarded defence lines covered by US fire and air power vulnerable to the point of ceasing to be the mainstay of the client army already dispirited and plagued by defeatism.

Meanwhile there has been a rash of popular uprisings to break the enemy's grip and seize control. It has resulted in the overrunning of 180 enemy bases and outposts, complete liberation of 3 districts in Binh Dinh, wiping out of a series of enemy military sub-sectors and enemy-held district towns—the centres of coercion and constraint—,disbandment of 31,000 US-paid soldiers through agitation work (including 20 companies and 425 platoons which left the enemy ranks in a body) and dissolution of the whole of the client administration structure during actions in Que Son, Tien Phuoc, Mo Duc, Ba To and other places. New extensive free areas have consequently emerged sometimes covering groups of several villages. They provide the local armed forces and people with new sources of manpower and resources for a rapid military and political build-up. New spring-boards are now available for fresh PLAF offensives and popular uprisings.

An obvious change has been brought to the war situation, to the advantage of the revolutionary forces, with a boost to our offensive posture and aggravation of the adverse defensive position, which tends to a complete collapse. The areas under enemy control keeps shrinking, thereby compounding our opponent's manpower and supply problems.

The enemy's dilemma boils down to this: On the one hand he has to dig in to hold territory and preserve his forces, but on the other hand he is compelled to deploy troops for counter-attacks in some areas in the midst of a serious troop shortage.

DIEN AN

Enemy fire base destroyed by PLAF

Opening new road
(sketch by **Vinh Phuc** and **Dang Duc Sinh**)

Building roads for tanks

PHAM XUAN BINH'S company of engineers was instructed to open Route X for tanks to assault the enemy at Base Y. That was the shortest way but littered with minefields on several portions, and the time fixed for the action reduced to one third.

After the briefing our men elatedly fanned out to the site with their mattocks, spades and weapons. For seven years they had been hanging on to this area, under bombs and shells, to keep the traffic going. Their pride: 18 medals awarded by the National Front for Liberation.

After dusk Base Y loomed large in front of Company 4 under parachute flares. OV.10 planes circled overhead. The strident noises of jets mingled with deafening ones made by adverse artillery and bombs from B.52s. Braving all that, the company reached the rallying point safely. Pham Xuan Binh ordered:

"The Mine-Searching and Destroying Team and the Enemy-Hunting Team go on ahead. The others stay here and get ready to start work."

Silence, complete moments ago, was broken when the people's fighters ebulliently wished success to their comrades of the MSDT and EHT. After the latter's departure, three-man teams set to their job. Several fetched tree; trunks felled and hidden by scouts at nightfall, others cut them into logs, others again dug the ground. The noise they made was drowned in the rumbling of American aeroplanes. Commander Pham Xuan Binh and political instructor Nguyen Van Bien ran from one team to another, helping and cheering their mates. Platoon leader Nguyen Van Loi, who had a sleepless night, was also present on the road.

A volley of adverse bullets thundered just nearby without interrupting the company's work which ended only at daybreak when the camouflage was completed. Together, officers and men took some dehydrated food and a gulp of water from their canteens to drench their thirst. Nguyen Van Bien was deeply moved to see his comrades cheerful after awhole night's hard work.

Gazing from a mound at the portion of the road which had just been opened to the traffic in forest-covered mountains, and at the leafy branches hiding the earth removed, the political instructor turned toward commander Pham Xuan Binh and said:

"We've done half of the job."

"We've thus overfulfilled our plan" Binh nodded with satisfaction.

"Maybe we'd better let the comrades rest for a while," Bien added. And when he asked for an advice from his men, it was unanimous:

"Tired we really are. But so long as the traffic is not opened throughout, we'll shrink from no efforts."

A few minutes later, every team resumed its work. Under the guidance of Nguyen Khac Sinh, a courageous and skilled technician, and with a high sense of urgency, his team mates searched for and defused mines laid by the adversary. Simultaneously, joining hands with gunners, an Enemy-Hunting Team led by deputy political officer Nguyen Khac Sinh, drove back an adverse scouting platoon, putting many mercenaries out of action.

Late in the afternoon Route X was entirely opened to the traffic, two days ahead of schedule. Lined with signal-posts made of logs bearing banana spathes and white paper, it looked like a sword planted into the heart of Base Y. A matter of minutes after Bien rang to the command of Engineer's Brigade 5, a liberation tank formation rushed to the battlefield.

Led by platoon chief Nguyen Van Loi, fighters of the tank unit waved their hands as they passed:

"Greetings to you, comrades engineers! You'll have your share in our tomorrow's feats."

"Bring us good successes on your return," shouted back the engineers. Thereupon compagny 4 prepared to leave and open other routes.

DUY THUY

27th anniversary of Lao Independence (Oct. 12, 1945—Oct. 12, 1972)

A triumphant just cause

27 years ago, like other peoples on the Indochinese peninsula, the *Lao* people rose up to wrest back power from the French colonialists and proclaimed the founding of an independent and sovereign Laos. But this heroic and industrious people could not enjoy freedom and independence for a long time. After World War II, in the eyes of imperialism, headed by the US, Laos occupied a "key position in US global strategy" and a "stopper" which, removed, would cause the Communist movement to spill over all other countries in South-East Asia — and this whole area would fall into communist hands (1). It was not by chance that in his speech delivered at the Conference of American governors in August 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower declared that Laos belonged to an area rich in strategic materials indispensable to war industries, especially tin, antimony, tungsten which the United States was lacking; he also stressed that Laos had a strategic position and might become a good military base, etc. This explains why the United States wholeheartedly helped the French colonialists stage a come-back to Laos in 1945 and quickly filled the vacuum left by them after their defeat in 1954, and undertook a direct aggression against Laos (2).

Confronted with the aggressive designs and acts of imperialist powers — successively the French and the Americans — bent on turning Laos into a new-type colony and a springboard to attack neighbouring countries from, the *Lao* people had no other choice than to take up arms, millions as one to fight the aggressors, shoulder to shoulder with the other brotherly Indochinese peoples.

The past 27 years have been for the *Lao* people a long process of a gallant, gruelling and persevering fight against home reactionaries and foreign invaders for the reconquest and safeguarding of national independence and freedom. They have witnessed their uninterrupted advance from one success to another, along a road marked by the Geneva Agreements of 1954 and of 1962. On October 12, 1970, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Proclamation of Lao Independence, Prince Souphanouvong, President of the Lao Patriotic Front, declared: "We have successfully confronted two powerful imperialist countries. This proves that although we are a small country and our economy is still backward, we have the courage and are able to resist effectively the French colonialists and the American imperialists — two brutal enemies of the world's peoples. By holding both of them in check not only are we liberating ourselves, but we also make a contribution to the movement of colonial countries and to the defence of peace in Asia and the world. That is why, our position and role have been continually enhanced internationally..."

The most outstanding achievement of the *Lao* people is the liberation of a wide area covering two-thirds of the national territory, with 12 provinces, 60 districts, 600 villages and 10,000 hamlets, running from Phong Sa Ly province in the North to Attopeu province in the South. This liberated area has been ceaselessly enlarged and consolidated in all respects — political, economic and cultural — into a firm base from where the Lao revolution can march towards bigger successes. It is also the microcosm of future Laos.

What has become apparent from those achievements recorded in the more than two decades of a grinding resistance against foreign invasion, is the vitality of a youthful people and their will for independence, and the judiciousness of the leadership of the Lao Patriotic Front headed by Prince Souphanouvong, the venerated leader of the entire people of Laos. It is thanks to this vitality, this will and this lucidity that the *Lao* people, though small in numbers and living in a relatively poor land, have been able to confront big imperialist powers.

The *Lao* people's strong vitality is also the source of so many wonderful feats in the people's war against the US imperialists' aggression.

In these days, one has been able to witness many substantial gains of the *Lao* people against the "Nixon doctrine."

In 1969, they foiled the strategic offensive launched by the US aggressors and their henchmen against the Plain of Jars-Xieng Khoang area.

In early 1971, they rolled back the big-scale operation "Lam Son 719" mounted by the US-Saigon command against South Laos.

Since then, following up their successes, the brotherly people and armed forces of Laos have staged devastating assaults on the Vientiane troops and their mercenaries in the Plain of Jars-Muong Xuoi area, not sparing the sanctuaries of the Vang Pao "special forces" at the Sam Thong-Long Cheng, while powerfully hitting at the enemy defence system in South Laos.

With their activity, the *Lao* people and armed forces have rendered inoperative the military formula of the Nixon doctrine: "US air power+native mercenaries," be the latter Vang Pao bandits, Saigon troops or Thai soldiery.

All encroachments of the US imperialists on the liberated areas have been successively frustrated as have their manœuvres to split the Indochinese theatre of operations and prevent the Vietnamese, *Lao* and Cambodians from helping one another. Meanwhile the aggressors themselves together with their lackeys have landed into an increasingly weak position and a complete deadlock.

It is from this winning position that on March 6, 1970, the *Lao* Patriotic Front put forward a five-point political solution, both sensible and reasonable, aimed at ending the war. It has ever since exerted all efforts for the realization of this solution whose objective is respect for the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of Laos: the US imperialists must withdraw from Laos, end all intervention and aggression, first of all end its war escalation and cease totally and unconditionally all bombing of the Lao territory, scrupulously abide by the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos, the affairs of Laos must be settled by the Lao parties concerned without foreign interference, a provisional government must be formed through consultations with a view to free and democratic elections to a National Assembly, national unification and concord and a peaceful, neutral, independent, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos.

The LPF five points provide a sound basis for a settlement in Laos. As Prince Souphanouvong has put it, "the consistent position of the Lao Patriotic Front is that the Lao problem should be settled on the basis of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos and the real situation obtaining now in Laos. As the United States has committed intervention and aggression against Laos, it must end this intervention and aggression."

The South Vietnamese people, standing on the same anti-Yankee front, wholly support the above position of the Lao Patriotic Front and people. We regard each of their successes big or small, in any respect, as our own. We pledge to further strengthen the traditional ties of solidarity between the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia in the common fight against the US aggressors and to continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the *Lao* people in our common advance towards bigger gains.

LE MINH

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(1) The New York Times, *August* 17, 1953.

(2) As a matter of fact, since 1949 *the American had been using their "aid" to pressure the French into recognizing the quisling administration in Laos and allowing it to have its own "army" and "diplomatic service," thus paving the way for further US intervention in Laos.*

(3) Speech at the Summit Conference of Indochinese Peoples, April 24, 1970.

Amulet-wearing Thai mercenaries captured in Laos

RSVN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS KINGDOM OF SWEDEN

At the invitation of the Social Democratic Party and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Viet Nam, Mme Nguyen Thi Binh, visited that country from September 29 to October 4, 1972.

During her stay, the RSVN Foreign Minister was accorded a considerate and cordial reception by the leaders of the Social Democratic Party and the Swedish people. On behalf of the Central Committee of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet Nam, Mme Nguyen Thi Binh attended the inauguration of the 25th convention of the Social Democratic Party, the demonstration, torch procession and meeting held by 5,000 people in Stockholm to urge that the United States end the war of aggression in Viet Nam and to voice their support for the reasonable offer of the PRG in the September 11, 1972 statement.

Mme Nguyen Thi Binh was received by Prime Minister Olof Palme and Foreign Minister Krishter Wickman who had cordial talks with her.

At the convention of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of South Viet Nam was the first foreign guest to be invited to speak right after the inaugural speech by Olof Palme, Chairman of the Party. At this convention, like in the October 3 meeting, the representative of the people of South Viet Nam was greeted with chants, "Long live the National Front for Liberation!", "Viet Nam will win!", a prolonged ovation and the song "Liberate the South" every time she appeared on the rostrum.

In the inaugural speech at the Party convention, during their interview with Mme Nguyen Thi Binh as well as at the mass meetings in honour of the South Vietnamese representative, leaders of the Swedish Social Democratic Party and Government strongly condemned US brutal aggression in Viet Nam and expressed the sympathy and support of the Social Democratic Party, Government and Swedes of all strata for the struggle of the Vietnamese. They particularly welcomed the proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam for a solution to the Viet Nam issue and supported the demand that the US withdraw completely from South Viet Nam, end the bombing and all other acts of war in Viet Nam, respect the right to genuine self-determination of the South Vietnamese people, discontinue its support for the Thieu regime and let the South Vietnamese people set up a government of national concord in South Viet Nam.

"The moment a government of national concord is formed, peace will immediately come back to South Viet Nam," Prime Minister Olof Palme said.

Speaking at the October 3 mass meeting, former Foreign Minister Torsten Nilsson said: "In fact, they (the Washington ruling circles) are killing not only civilians in Viet Nam but also the people of the United States... It is time the US government entered into serious negotiations for a political settlement. Peace can be achieved only if it really embarks on the path of meaningful negotiation. The solution proposed by the Provisional Revolutionary Government causes no difficulty to the US. The goal of this solution is a broad government of national concord in Saigon embracing all political and religious tendencies... The US must quit Indochina, that's the way for the US to get out without suffering a political and moral disaster. A free and independent Viet Nam rid of all foreign intervention is the condition for a lasting peace in South-East Asia."

"It is not enough to demonstrate," he continued, "the essential is that we must support (Viet Nam) morally, politically and also materially. The Vietnamese people are fighting for their freedom and independence and also for the whole mankind. That is why, the support given by world opinion to the liberation struggle of Viet Nam means that mankind not only admires its heroism but also realizes that this is a struggle for all the fundamental values of man."

nixon's vietnamization gamble

"VIETNAMIZATION" is a big if not the biggest gamble in Richard Nixon's political life. He himself admitted in a speech as recalled by *The Far Eastern Economic Review* (March 24, 1972), that his Viet Nam record would make or break him. Testifying to the House Armed Forces Committee on March 9, 1971, Secretary of Defence Laird described "Vietnamization" as the beginning of the implementation of the Nixon doctrine in Viet Nam, site of its toughest test and its most sensitive spot.

It is precisely in this gamble that Nixon has suffered bitter setbacks over the past three years and more, and is presently finding himself before the prospect of losing all. This will be borne out by a survey of his performance.

What has Nixon achieved ?

UNDER "Vietnamization" he has been intensifying and expanding the US aggression throughout Indochina. Under him, American forces invaded Cambodia in 1970 and Laos in 1971, and the aeronaval war against the DRVN was resumed on a larger scale in 1972 with the mining of all her ports. Under this program he has been exerting tremendous efforts, fielding on a rather narrow battlefield unmatched air and naval forces and most devastating weapons, techniques and tactics.

Waging a genocidal, biocidal and ecological war is one thing, but attaining its set aims is quite another. Usually, US military and information organs regard — at least officially — the "progress" of "Vietnamization" as a factor conditioning American troop withdrawals and allowing the degree of Saigon forces' combat "self-sufficiency," a method often inevitably self-deluding. For, it is actually what is in US Ambassador Bunker's own words, "changing the colour of the corpses" on the battlefield.

Mr Nixon's setbacks in "Vietnamization"

First of all, his military results should be appraised in the context of his political and military objectives. From this point of view the American President has suffered major setbacks. To everyone's knowledge, "Vietnamization" was to bring about a military decision, create a US strong posture on the field so as to save American neocolonialism in South Viet Nam; and — in view of US global strategy — test the soundness of the Nixon doctrine.

In point of fact, the Americans have not scored any military gains of strategic significance. By counter-attacking in Cambodia in 1970 and in Laos 1971, they did not attain their main objective, namely, destruction of the opponent forces. Reversely, they received devastating return blows and lost sizable mercenary forces — "backbone of 'Vietnamization.'"

The US has not been able to isolate the South Vietnamese revolution in spite of its strenuous exertions and—as Abrams has made it clear — to strike at each Viet Cong ricebowl and grain of salt, to destroy their logistical bases and supplies. It has proved incapable of modifying the balance of forces on the battlefield, which continues to tilt to its disadvantage. Its mercenaries have not proved equal to their task of replacing the pulled out GIs, being heavily battered in the "Vietnamization" process.

Neither have the American aggressors been able to snatch the initiative of action from their adversary. In the course of counter-attacks they and their hirelings have been badly battered and driven into a worse defensive posture.

In early 1971, they embarked on the invasion of Southern Laos and Northeastern Cambodia, the greatest operations ever mounted to compensate for the reverses of the previous years and turn the tide of the war. Nevertheless it was then that "Vietnamization" experienced the heaviest disaster. The outcome of these two tests of strength has assumed a far-reaching strategic significance: If with such strong US support as in Laos the Saigon army did not make a decent showing it will never be able to do so (*The Sunday Times*, March 1971).

Second, the Saigon army and the strategic measures at its command have administered the proof of their dismal ineffectiveness.

In the past three years, the Americans have done their best to turn Saigon troops into the main strategic forces acting in concert with important parts of US remaining forces in order to fulfil the military responsibility set by "Vietnamization." The mercenaries have been very substantially strengthened in terms of manpower and modern equipment. They have received powerful support in fire power, especially from the US Air Force, and, if need be, in combat. But to no avail.

They have failed to bring pacification to fruition despite the magnitude of actions undertaken, the cost accepted and the time spent on them. It has happened that raids launched again and again on the same rather narrow areas have yielded "very flimsy" results, assessed the Western press.

They have been unable to consolidate their battle array which has constantly come under fire and remained unstable.

Not to mention that a series of much-vaunted "Vietnamized war" tactics like mobile helicopter tactics, height-cluster tactics, etc. have repeatedly been put into operation and have gradually lost their sting in the fighting.

Illusions, if any, entertained about "Vietnamization" up to early this year, must have been shattered by the current wave of strategic offensives of the liberation armed forces and people of South Viet Nam. Nixon's strategy is facing total collapse. That is the reason why on May 8 he chose a "decisive" military action intended, he affirmed, to "end the war." Clearly enough it however was nothing short of "re-Americanizing" the war on a larger scale, with a new invading air and naval armada, and new methods including the blockade of DRVN ports.

But what is "re-Americanization" if not an admission that "Vietnamization" has come to a flop? In fact, the return of a major US force for massive participation in the war has neither proved "decisive" to end it, nor turned the tables on the opponent. It is in the context of a deployment of nearly 200,000 US troops that:

— Over 100,000 Saigon troops, half of them "crack," "combat seasoned" ones, were knocked down and, moreover, in their very strongholds.

— Large bits of the pacification network were crushed. Another two million and a half South Vietnamese were liberated. The source of manpower and resources for "Vietnamization" has progressively dried up.

— The battle array of the "Vietnamized" war is going from bad to worse.

Thus, after three years of "Vietnamization" and five months of "re-Americanization" to save "Vietnamization," Nixon has not come any nearer to his initial objective. He wanted a successful conclusion of the Viet Nam war. Under the present circumstances, this means the US is to withdraw its troops and leave behind in Saigon a noncommunist administration that can stand on its own feet and is capable of resisting the Communists' threat (*The International Herald Tribune*, Feb.9, 1970).

MR Nixon who has been forced to pull out UStroops has missed no opportunity to boast of the "progress" of "Vietnamization." But facts show that after the withdrawal of the bulk of American forces, the Saigon administration has not been able to paddle its own canoe. And there lies the reason for his "re-Americanizing" the conflict.

It is too late now. Nixon can no longer revert to his previous position, nor conceal his failure.

But the aggressors are still blinded by their wishful thinking to plain facts and are nurturing wild hopes. Nonetheless, if there is any lesson to be learned from ten years of American involvement, including four under the Nixon administration, it is this: No brutal force whatsoever can dictate a military solution to the Viet Nam problem.

VAN DUC

Elements of the Saigon 44th Regiment fleeing from Kontum

World Opinion:

Nixon bent on imposing a quisling administration on South Viet Nam

FOR more than one month, the world has resounded with words of warm support for the sound position and will for peace of the South Vietnamese people which was once again expressed in the September 11, 1972 statement of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. More than once has this statement been referred to with particular sympathy. It has been enthusiastically welcomed many times and at different places, in declarations, messages and letters addressed to the leaders of the South Vietnamese people, during diplomatic and friendly meetings among countries, in international or national conferences, during mass meetings against the US aggression and for Viet Nam, in the press and daily radio broadcasts.

Part of the SOS contingent in the Nov. 6 anti-war demonstration (USA)

Judging from the world-wide anti-US movement, one can safely conclude that to progressive opinion in the world the crux of the Viet Nam issue is unquestionably US aggression and that the imprescriptible national rights of the South Vietnamese people must be respected. Since the US has launched an aggression, it must immediately end it, withdraw all US and satellite troops together with all its war means and dismantle all its military bases in South Viet Nam. The US must scrap its client administration set up by itself as a tool for the implementation of its neo-colonialist policy.

The people of South Viet Nam who have shown great capabilities and won substantial successes in their liberation war will, of course, be able to choose for themselves the most appropriate political system to consolidate national independence, carry out democratic reforms, safeguard peace and build up a free and happy life for themselves.

Meanwhile, the US propaganda machine has continued to play the same old tune about "North Viet Nam's aggression against the South," about "North Viet Nam trying to impose a communist regime on South Viet Nam," about "the US commitment to defend the right to self-determination of the people of South Viet Nam."... These shopworn themes sound pleasant only to the ears of the US imperialists and their henchmen and followers of all stripes themselves.

As pointed out by world public opinion, the Nixon administration still refuses to renounce its stance as a bellicose aggressor and is still plotting to force on South Viet Nam a quisling regime of American style. The Nixon administration is persisting in its negative attitude towards the proposal of the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam, and setting its face against its fair and reasonable offers, especially that concerning the formation of a provisional government of national concord made in the September 11 statement of the PRG. Meanwhile it is doing its utmost to intensify its aggression. Nixon's stubbornness and bellicosity became more apparent in his October 5 news conference and through the dispatch of many F-111 swing wing jet bombers to Southeast Asia for more furious air attacks against Viet Nam and the other countries in Indochina.

On the one hand, under the pressure of progressive opinion in the United States and the world, Nixon is trying every means to mislead opinion, and uttering platitudes to create the impression that he is seriously negotiating an end to the war, that the Viet Nam issue is nearing a settlement, in order to cross the bridge by means of dupery in the November election.

Highly appreciative of the peace initiative of the PRG on the formation of a provisional government of national concord reiterated in September 11 statement, public opinion has once again reaffirmed that "peace will come back the day a government of national concord is formed in South Viet Nam" (Olof Palme, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden).

At the same time it has also been pointed out that "only by forming a government of national concord is it possible to hold free and democratic general elections in South Viet Nam. As for the election, the United States wants it to be organized by the Thieu administration, it will be only a farce whose pre-arranged results can deceive nobody" (Declaration of the Polish Peace Council).

Every attempt of the US ruling circles to maintain the Saigon administration and liquidate the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam will only prolong indefinitely the war and the US involvement in Viet Nam (Statement in support of Viet Nam by the Socialist Youth Union of Czechoslovakia).

"The proposal to form a provisional government of national concord is a sensible and reasonable one," Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Chiao Kuan-hua stressed at the 27th session of the United Nations General Assembly. "It proves that the Vietnamese side has no intention to impose a Communist regime on South Viet Nam. Rejection of this only means attempting to continue imposing the Nguyen Van Thieu regime on the people of South Viet Nam."

"The main obstacle at present in negotiations lies in the Nixon administration's effort to maintain the Thieu administration," commented Foreign Minister Nguyen Thi Binh in Paris.

Progressive Americans have also made clear their view of this "administration" on which Mr Nixon is staking his political future.

"The government of President Nguyen Van Thieu has become increasingly repressive," *Newsweek* magazine wrote on September 18. "It has waged a war on the South Vietnamese press, closing down several newspapers and fining 48 publishers for violations of the nation's harsh press law. It has arrested some 15,000 dissidents and charged them with aiding the enemy, and last week President Thieu ended his country's brief fling at democracy by abolishing the election of officials at the village level... and with their faltering military machine, crumbling economy and repressive political system, the people of South Viet Nam face a dim future."

"Mr Thieu is simply," the *Washington Post* remarked on September 11, "the top man in a military dictatorship whose chief, if not sole, purpose is to maintain its ever more frantic clutch on power... How many times has President Nixon rationalized continued American participation in the war — a war which in 1968 he pledged to bring to an end by 1972 — by asserting some supposed responsibility to assure self-determination for South Viet Nam (Saigon regime)? How often has he sanctified the will of the people in the South? Yet there in Saigon is a leader who repeatedly demonstrates that it is not the self-determination of the South Vietnamese which is his goal, but the perpetuation of his personal power.

... We have long felt that Mr Nixon is wrong to keep insisting that the war is worth more American lives and dollars, more death and more destruction in Viet Nam, more dislocation at home."

It is precisely for these reasons that the Nixon administration's attempt to impose an alien system on a nation endowed with a long history of resistance against foreign aggression and its efforts to oppose a political force which "legitimately represents Vietnamese nationalism" (*International Herald Tribune*, January 27, 1972) have been strongly denounced by Senator McGovern.

"The Nixon administration is the most corrupt in the nation's history," the South Dakota Senator said. "It has corrupted America. Our sacred honor is laid at the feet of dictators, dope runners and gangsters in Saigon, a government that subverts our ideals just as eagerly as it steals our aid... The war in Viet Nam is unjust and corrupts our policies. The Thieu regime cannot be talked clean by official deception, and it cannot be washed clean by American blood. Instead, our precious values are corrupted by the very government we fight to defend.

And in defence of that government, the most incredible bombardment the world has ever seen now rains down on helpless people in Indochina... The bombing does not save the South Vietnamese, it destroys them. And while it does that, it corrupts the compassion and humanity of our people."

It is also for these reasons that recently the US Senate has adopted an amendment condemning the dictatorial Nguyen Van Thieu regime and urging the Nixon administration to end its support for the repressive actions of the Saigon administration which is strangling the freedom of the press, the right to vote and democratic liberties of the people of South Viet Nam. The progressive world is spurning the Thieu administration and stigmatizing Nixon for obstinately trying to impose this rotten and dictatorial regime on the South Vietnamese people. How will Nixon answer his own charge which is returned to him?

DAI LIEN

RSVN PRG Recognized by Equatorial Guinea

ON September 30, in the course of a conversation with Nguyen Van Tien, deputy head of the delegation of the RSVN PRG to the Paris Conference on Viet Nam, Bionifacio Nguema Etono Andeme, Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea made known a decision of his government to recognize the PRG, and affirmed that the Republic of Equatorial Guinea will continue to support the just struggle of the Vietnamese people against imperialist aggression.

SOUTH VIET NAM — CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION